

NATCHEZ MARINE HOSPITAL.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

TRANSMITTING

A copy of a letter from the Superintendent of the repairs of the Natchez Marine Hospital.

FEBRUARY 26, 1856.—Referred to the Committee of Ways and Means, and ordered to be printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
February 27, 1856.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit, herewith, a copy of a letter from the superintendent of the repairs of the Natchez marine hospital, and also of a proposal for certain work referred to therein by him.

The work which has been done on the hospital during the past season was necessary to the preservation of the building, and was contemplated in the recommendation of the last appropriation of \$4,000, which at the time was considered sufficient.

The letter now sent you shows the necessity of an additional appropriation; and, in view of the facts submitted, I have to recommend that the amount named, \$1,350, be appropriated for the completion of the work.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

JAMES GUTHRIE,
Secretary of the Treasury.

Hon. N. P. BANKS, Jr.,
Speaker House of Representatives.

NEW CUSTOM-HOUSE,
New Orleans, February 8, 1856.

SIR: On the 3d of July last I had the honor to inform the department that the new slate roof of the United States marine hospital

at Natchez leaked at times, from the inclination being 1 upon 7, instead of 1 upon 4 or 5, and recommended that the latter pitch should be given to it. But, upon being informed by the department that this modification, although approved of, could not be made until a new appropriation could be obtained from Congress for that object, and aware that in the meantime the framing of the present roof and the whole interior of the building would be sadly deteriorated by the leak already referred to, and that if the delay were great, the slate contractors who put on said roof would probably change their minds about reslating the new one free from additional charges to the government, as stated in my letter of July last, I concluded it would be better, if practicable, to substitute a metallic covering for the slate one, as the inclination would not then be too great. After a lengthy discussion on the subject with the firm of which the late slate contractor is a member, they made me an offer, a copy of which is herewith enclosed, to take off the slate and tiles thereon, without any deduction for breakage, for the sum of \$700, or \$6 36 $\frac{4}{10}$ per square. This offer I accepted, as I found that, together with the sum I then had available for the same object, (about \$1,300,) an excellent galvanized iron covering could be put on in place of said slate roof. But after I had ordered the materials for that object, and made my arrangements to commence the work immediately, (for I was on the point of leaving for the North,) all communication between this place and Natchez was closed, in consequence of the yellow fever having been declared epidemic here a short time previously; and I had thereby to incur greater expenses than would otherwise have been the case. I also found it absolutely necessary to put up a new cooking-range in the kitchen of that building, the cost of which, with the additional expenses referred to, will amount to about \$350, which will have to be provided for in a new appropriation. The repairs of this building are now considered completed, with the exception of the ceiling, injured by the leak of the old shingle roof, the repairs of which will cost about \$200. The copper gutters ought also to be protected in a permanent manner from the direct action of the sun—probably by galvanized sheet-iron fastened on over to the ridges of the roof, the cost of which would be about \$300. The cost of improving the grounds around the building, by planting trees, shrubbery, &c., would amount, as already reported, to about \$500 more; making in all, for these different objects, as above specified, the sum of about \$1,350.

I remain, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

G. T. BEAUREGARD,

Capt. and Bt. Major of Eng., Superintendent.

Hon. JAMES GUTHRIE,

Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D. C.

P. S.—As I had no authority from the department to exceed the means available for that roof, I hold myself pecuniarily responsible for that excess until a new appropriation can be obtained for that object.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

NEW ORLEANS, *July* 31, 1855.

We hereby propose to give seven hundred dollars (\$700) for the slates and tiles on the roof of the marine hospital at Natchez, and take the same from the roof when called on to do so; in consideration of which, we shall be released from all further responsibility respecting the slates of the same. And this is in final settlement of the whole affair.

I. & J. C. DAVIDSON.

Accepted.

G. T. BEAUREGARD,
Capt. and Bt. Major of Eng., Superintendent.

A true copy.

G. T. BEAUREGARD,
Capt. and Bt. Major of Eng., Superintendent.